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Briefly Speaking

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Around the seven points enumerated here a new Department of Agriculture is being built. Up to 1933 the Department of Agriculture was first of all a research and educational agency. The acts of Congress adopted since 1933 have required the Department to carry research into action. The new Department of Agriculture furnishes machinery which the farmers of the United

States, township by township, county by county, State by State, can use effectively and continuously to serve the welfare of agriculture as a whole and the Nation as a whole. Through the new Department of Agriculture it is possible for farmers to build economic democracy through their township and county committees. This they are doing. But the work of the new Department must steadily be built upon the research and educational work of the old Department. The whole Department of Agriculture, old and new, must express itself continuously in terms of action which will best conserve the soil, feed the cities, and build a farm civilization which will forever serve as the foundation of democracy.

Looking toward the future, I believe there will emerge an agricultural program behind which all farmers and all city people truly interested in the general welfare can stand, and that it will include these seven points:

First, farmers should have a fair share in the national income; that is, a share which will give the average farmer as much purchasing power relative to the average nonfarmer as was the case during the 50 years before the World War.

Second, the welfare of all farmers, and of city people as well, demands that the wide fluctuations in supply and price of the major crops be evened out as much as possible by the use of the ever-normal granary and crop insurance.

Third, the people who live on the land must have security of tenure, for their own sake, for the sake of the land, and for the sake of our civilization.

Fourth, the soil must be used properly, to meet the needs of the present generation, and at the same time be conserved for the sake of future farmers and future city people.

Fifth, farmers through sound cooperatives must come into control of those marketing, processing, purchasing, and service functions for which they are capable of displaying superior business efficiency.

Compiled by the Division of Information, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, from official and unofficial sources for the information of committeemen and others cooperating in the administration of the AAA programs.

Sixth, family-sized farms should be favored by the Federal rules of the game having to do with benefit payments and similar aids to rural income.

Seventh, Federal and State funds must continue to be spent to promote agricultural research and farm efficiency, for only by applying the results of scientific research, can agriculture meet the demands of a large city population and at the same time husband our national resources.—*Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, in address broadcast September 22, 1937.*

Prices received by farmers for meat animals have more than doubled since 1933, and farm income from livestock has increased greatly. In 1936 cash farm income from meat animals was the largest for any year since 1930. A further increase occurred in early 1937.

LIVESTOCK PRICES AND IMPORTS GAIN.

In the last 10 years, at least, when prices of livestock and farm income from livestock in this country have been relatively high, imports of meats and cattle have been larger than average. Livestock generally were fairly high in 1927, 1928, and 1929, and imports of meats and cattle were above average. From 1931 to 1934, when livestock prices and income were low, imports were very small. The advance in livestock prices since 1934 has been accompanied by a considerable increase in imports.—*Agricultural Situation, July 1937.*

Some persons say it is essentially unmoral to agree not to produce, to plow up lands, to kill little pigs, but I don't agree. No shoe manufacturer feels it is wrong morally not to produce to his full capacity, even though some families are without shoes. So long as we are under a profit system we cannot argue with the farmer for taking a leaf out of the industrialist's book. Under a different system it might perhaps be logical to attack both farmers and industrialists for not producing to their full capacity.—*Dr. Percy W. Bidwell, department of economics, University of Buffalo.*

CAPACITY PRODUCTION.

The people of America have been sitting on their porches watching their continent go by.—*Stuart Chase in Rich Land, Poor Land.*

The 1938 program estimates the acreages that would be ample to meet all the needs of the country for crops that deplete the soil, such as wheat, corn, cotton, tobacco, and so on. These acreages for the whole country will be divided up among the States, counties, and individual farms. Within this whole group of soil-depleting crops, the program states the needs for some particular crops. For example, within the acreage goal for all depleting crops, there will be a goal for corn, a goal for cotton, goals for the different types of tobacco, a goal for rice, a goal for peanuts, and a goal for potatoes.

On the soil-conserving side of the scales, the program also establishes acreage goals for soil-conserving crops and practices.

Practically speaking, the use of goals this year will work out about like this for a farmer: He will know at the beginning of the season how many acres are in his total soil-depleting crop goal, how many are in any special depleting crop goals such as cotton. He will know the soil-building goal with its provisions for soil-conserving crops and soil-building practices. And he will know the total amount of money he may earn by meeting these acreage goals completely.

The program is open to all farmers who want to join with others in the country-wide effort to save and restore soil fertility and to balance production. Those looking for a temporary convenience or for relief money won't like the program. They will like it if they consider it as a Nation-wide effort to restore soil fertility, to stabilize agriculture, and to give the whole country greater security.

Furthermore, the program represents 1 year in a long-time effort. It looks to the future as well as the present. Particularly, it takes into account the objectives which Congress stated in its recent resolution promising to make new farm legislation the first business of the next session. It fits in with the ever-normal granary which Congress said should be provided for in the coming legislation.—*H. R. Tolley, A. A. A. Administrator in Farm Flashes.*

A part of the tenancy problem in parts of the Corn Belt arises from the fact that approximately half of the individual owners of rented farms are past 60 years of age, many of whom do not realize the extent of soil depletion, or are more interested in current income than in the maintenance of property.—*Dr. H. C. M. Case, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois.*

American farmers cannot be expected to live under conditions of stabilized poverty and save the soil at the same time.

Just as we got conservation as a byproduct of adjustment in 1934 and 1935, we are now getting adjustment as a byproduct of conservation. We could not devote fewer acres to soil-depleting crops, such as tobacco, cotton, wheat, and corn, under the old programs without getting soil conservation through increased plantings of alfalfa, clover, and other legumes and grasses. We cannot build and improve our soil unless we substitute legumes and grasses for tobacco, cotton, wheat, and corn.

CONSUMER AND PRODUCER NEED STABLE PRODUCTION OF FARM COMMODITIES.

We also secured stability through both programs, in the sense that they have been factors in increasing prices and in keeping them at reasonable levels. At the same time, it has become apparent that the present programs may not be sufficient to prevent the piling up of excessive supplies and a return of disastrously low prices.

There is a question, however, whether the present program, valuable as it is, is adequate from either the standpoint of the producer or consumer. If we assume the responsibility for programs which aim at securing the farmer a reasonable and stable income, we must also assume the responsibility for assuring the consumers an adequate supply of food and fiber at reasonable prices.

Nor will our present plan meet the situation caused by a series of years when growing conditions are unusually good. It will eliminate the fluctuations which arise from heavy surpluses only to a certain extent. Many feel that something more is needed if all is to be done that can be done to mitigate the fluctuation in production, prices, and income.—*J. B. Hutson, Assistant Administrator, A. A. A., at Greenville, N. C., July 2, 1937.*

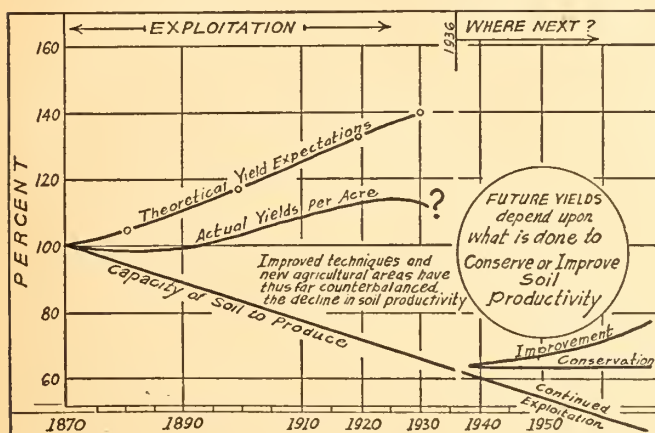
The almost continuous increase in land values prior to 1920 gave rise to the often-repeated witticism that "farming is the only business in which a man can lose money all his life and die rich." It made speculators out of most landowners—farmers as well as others. And speculators are not soil conservers. Speculators are buyers and sellers who are not much concerned with a future generation's interest in any particular parcel of land.—*A. A. A. Pamphlet G-54, Soil Conservation—Its Place in National Agricultural Policy.*

An individual's interest in the future of a particular parcel of land may not be for longer than a year, and rarely extends beyond a generation or so; whereas that of a nation is reckoned in centuries.

The acreage of soybeans grown alone for all purposes in 1937 is 7.3 percent larger than last year, reports the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

There can be but one explanation for the stubbornness with which acre yields have resisted the farmer's efforts to improve them, says Ohio State University Extension Bulletin 175. The natural productive capacity of the land has been deteriorating at a rate almost fast enough to offset all of these improvements in soil and crop management. With every step ahead we have slipped back almost if not quite as far.

LAND DETERIORATES DESPITE AID TO SOIL.



Improved farm practices in Ohio since 1870-79 should have resulted in 40 to 60 percent higher yields per acre; but the aggregate yield has increased less than 15 percent; improved practices have thus only slightly more than counterbalanced the decline in the ability of the soil to produce. With continued soil exploitation, average yields per acre must soon trend downward; yields can be maintained only if programs of soil conservation and soil improvement are generally adopted.

We all admit that abundant crops are a good thing. We like to think that plenty of corn and wheat and cotton is an especially good thing. Then suddenly a depression hits us and we find that while farmers have been producing right up to the hilt in what people call an economy of abundance, the manufacturers have been cutting

ECONOMICS OF SCARCITY AND PLENTY.

down production all along to hold up their prices in what some people call an economy of scarcity. The farmer finds prices for farm products tobogganing down hill because of the size of his surplus. What a short time before had been a good thing, under a disordered economic system has now become an evil thing indeed—and the farmer himself is left high and dry. What the manufacturer has done to create scarcity has never been a good thing; in the long run, not even for himself. It has worked great hardship on his own workers as well as on farmers, because these two groups have a common stake in our kind of economic society.—M. L. Wilson, Under Secretary of Agriculture, at Eleventh National 4-H Club Camp.

Though the situation of the moment is excellent, we have no safeguard, even in the year 1938, against the great danger of loss of income due to drought or against the equally great danger of low prices. I have expressed my belief that a program to guard against both these future dangers would be of enormous value not only to farmers but to the consumers of the Nation if it could provide for an ever-normal granary with storage of surpluses grown in big-crop years for use in time of short crops. Good as our present farm program is, it ought to be improved to take care of the consumers' interest in years of bad weather and of the producers' interest in years of good weather.—President Roosevelt to Chairman Senate and House Committees on Agriculture.

The highest national farm income since 1929 is now practically a certainty, with possibilities that it may approximate the average annual return of the best post-war years 1923 through 1929.

FARMERS' DOLLAR HELPS US OUT OF DEPRESSION.

Because the relation of the farmers' dollar to industrial products is more favorable than prevailed through the 1920's, agricultural regions are expected over the next year or so to be larger purchasers of manufactured goods than for almost any year since the World War. The general business recovery since the ebb of the depression can be attributed, in large part, to the steady expansion in farm income.—Wall Street Journal.

Less than 18 months after the collapse of farm prices in 1920 Prof. Richard T. Ely, University of Wisconsin, warned that "In our own country there must be a proper proportion between agricultural production and the production of nonagricultural goods and services. This is fundamental in the interest of a national land policy."

NATIONAL EMERGENCY.

In a soil improvement fertility contest a number of years ago a county agent made a statement something like this: "The soil fertility problem of this county arises out of the necessity of producing modern houses, motorcars, and concrete roads out of the same soil which in its virgin state produced log cabins, spring wagons, and roads through the clearings."

CONDITIONS CHANGE.

We have had farm depressions while business remained fairly good in the cities, but we have never had, to my knowledge, a serious business decline in this country while the farms remained prosperous.—Sydney G. McAllister, president, International Harvester Co., at Indianapolis, October 26, 1937.

BEST WELFARE OF COTTON BELT REQUIRES MIDDLE COURSE TO BOOST INCOME.

I believe that something effective can be done for the Cotton Belt and that something will be done. I believe the best welfare of the Cotton Belt lies along a sensible middle course which would seek to give the farmer the greatest possible income from cotton. It would:

First, continue such moderate adjustment of production as would preserve and build up the fertility of the soil and still allow production of at least as much cotton as the markets of this and other countries have been accustomed to take.

Second, it would encourage greater consumption of cotton in ways that would raise the standard of living of all our people.

Third, it would provide for an increased production of home food and feed crops.

Fourth, it would serve notice to the world that the United States intends to keep its place in the world cotton market and it would supplement the market price with payments to cooperating farmers on an allotted cotton production goal.

Fifth, it would provide authority for loans to prevent price collapse.

Sixth, it would provide authority for marketing quotas on the entire crop, to be used after a referendum of producers in time of emergency as a further protection against disaster from crushing surpluses.

Such a 6-point cotton program would be a sensible and progressive development of the cotton programs of the last 4 years. It would serve the South and in so doing would be in the interests of all agriculture and in the national interest. It is a program for which we all can fight.—*Secretary Wallace in Charting the Course for Cotton.*

Is agriculture a local matter? Even a local shower is not a local matter. It has economic and social implications that extend far beyond the boundaries of the State.—*Harry L. Brown, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.*

Public prosperity is like a tree: Agriculture is its roots; industry and commerce are its branches and leaves. If the root suffers, the leaves fall, the branches break, and the tree dies.—*Chinese Philosophy.*

All New England business has a stake in the Boston milk market. Various plans for voluntary market stabilization having failed, the only remaining practical method is by Federal order. Emergency conditions demand emergency treatment. The alternatives are Federal supervision with reasonable prices or a disorganized and highly competitive market with ruinously low prices to farmers. Disorganization cannot fail to affect adversely all business interests in the rural sections and is bound to prevent

such sections from reaching the returning prosperity already attained in larger cities.

During the 3 years of Federal supervision in this market New England farmers received over \$12,000,000 more in return than the same amount of milk could have brought under prices immediately before Federal control. The proposed amendments remove certain unpopular provisions of the previous order and, coupled with the confidence which has been created by the decision of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, assure a more practical and efficient administration. Under such conditions we have a right to expect even greater benefits than were enjoyed during the previous period the order was in effect.—*Deane C. Davis, chairman Businessmen's Milk Committee of New England.*

The people of the United States consume about 500 million bushels of wheat a year for food.

SURPLUS WHEAT MAY BE PROBLEM IN 1938 IF YIELD IS AVERAGE.

Farmers use about 75 to 80 million bushels a year for seed for next year's crop.

Farmers also feed between 50 and 75 million bushels each year to livestock, except when prices are low in relation to feed-grain prices, when they feed more. With average yields, 57 to 59 million acres will produce the normal domestic requirements of the United States and give 50 million bushels for export.

At average yields, 80 million acres will produce 944 million bushels, or nearly 300 million bushels more than we ordinarily use at home. Besides what is needed for building up domestic reserves, what can we do with the rest of it?

Can we sell it abroad?

If we can, what can we get for it?—*A. A. Pamphlet G-72, What About Wheat in 1938?*

The Pilgrim Fathers stepped from Plymouth Rock onto a continent of grass and forest. Grass brushed the stirrups of Buffalo Bill as he rode through a kingdom of unplowed range, and the empire builders laid their rails on prairie sod from the Ohio River to the setting sun. But the grass vanished before the pioneer, his covered wagon and his plow. Wheat and cotton erased the Texas Trail, and the wealth of the land of Crockett and Houston and Buffalo Bill, of Ezra Meeker and Brigham Young—the wealth of our country—is going down to the sea in mud.—*Chester C. Davis, former Administrator A. A. A.*

Nothing, in my opinion, would contribute more to the welfare of the States than the proper management of the lands.—*George Washington.*